

It is to be feared too many of our Rulers have an eye to make a Prey of these poor People, because an Opinion seems to be propagated, that it is Criminal to cut a Tree down off the vacant Lands. Whether this Notion took its Rise from the great Men's making Tar and Turpentine on vacant Lands, which is a quite different Case, or from the Motive's above mentioned, I would advise no honest Man to suffer such an Opinion to take Place with him; for the Thing is so inhuman and base, that you will not find a man but he will deny and clear himself, or hide such a Design as long as he can, which must proceed from his Conceptions of the Heinousness there of.

Who can justify the Conduct of any Government who have countenanced and encouraged so many Thousands of poor Families to bestow their All, and the Labour of many Years, to improve a Piece of waste Land, with full Expectation of a Title, to deny them Protection from being robed of it [78] all by a few roguish Individuals, who never bestowed a Farthing thereon?

And, 3dly, That this has been the Sense of all the British Legislations; and that the contrary Doctrine is as contrary to Nature and Justice as the Story of the Dog in the Manger. To evince this a little, requires to be said no other than the constant Instructions to all his Majesty's colonies, though grossly abused; such as Head Rights, the Cultivation Clause, in all our Patents——and the Necessity of applying for an Order of council to obtain any larger Grants. Nothing is more hurtful to the Common Wealth, than for individuals to hold unreasonable quantities of lands, and rent them out to the Poor. A Traveller may know when he rides through such Lands, by the bad Husbandry and discontented Looks of the People. These Sentiments of Justice are so natural, that they strike every Man in the Same Light, and it is to be hoped will do so for ever.

A S E R M O N³⁷

GEN. 49th Chap. Verses 14, 15, and 21.

Issachar is a strong ass, couching down between two burdens.

³⁷ In this "sermon," as well as the one which follows it, Husband is a plagiarist, adopting both the style and the general ideas of James Murray's *Sermons to Asses*, a pamphlet published in London in 1768, and reprinted in Philadelphia by John Dunlap in 1769 and 1770 and in Boston by an unknown printer in 1770. Murray was a Scotch clergyman who organized an independent congregation at Almwick. The theme of his *Sermons to Asses* was the injustice of the discriminations against Dissenters, the incompatibility of an established Church with the church of the scripture, and the burden on the poor imposed by excise taxes. The work was dedicated to Rev. Messrs. G. W., J. W., W. R., and M. M., viz.: George Whitefield, John Wesley, William Romaine, and Martin Madon. Husband, of course, abridges, and also inserts illustrations from conditions in North Carolina.